



# **GREEN SOCIETY**

THE PARTY CARING FOR YOUR EARTH AND HER PEOPLE

## **MANIFESTO**

**1996**

TOWARDS A GREEN SOCIETY

THIS PAPER IS MADE FROM 100% RECYCLED FIBRE

We are Earth, the people, plants and animals,  
rains and oceans,  
breath of the forest and flow of the sea.  
We honour Earth as the home of all living things.  
We cherish Earth's beauty and diversity of life.

From the preamble of THE NGO EARTH CHARTER prepared by the non-  
governmental organisations at Rio de Janeiro, June 1992.

The GREEN SOCIETY is the first political party to adopt the Rio NGO EARTH  
CHARTER.

The GREEN SOCIETY Government would promote a society which recognised the ability and duty of all people to contribute and the right of all people to be cared for.

We would require a just society which guaranteed civil rights and fair procedures while recognising the intrinsic value and rights of nature.

We would want the availability of access by all to all resources and the sharing of economic wealth.

A GREEN SOCIETY Government would share our educational wealth and guarantee our ecological constituents.

We would wisely plan for our future and jealously protect our past.

Whilst insisting on the recognition of personal responsibility a truly green society would ask that co-operation take precedence over competition.

All of our policies are subject to the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi which we recognise to be our founding constitutional covenant.

## Wrong Direction

Since 1945, modern life - based on our extraordinary scientific achievements - has promised an ever upward prize of growth and improvement. Five decades of consistent growth in the developed world have brought about many impressive technological changes and improvements in the wealth of the few at a massive cost to the environment and to society in developed and developing countries alike. Despite the greatest economic growth in history, 80% of Earth's resources are still consumed by only 20% of its people. One billion people endure homelessness and inadequate food and clothing.

The physical throughputs of our human economy have already grown beyond what the ecosystem can sustain. Soils and waters are contaminated, fisheries and forests have been lost to us forever, and *global* climate change threatens havoc within the next thirty years, if not before.

We have also seen a loss of community and massive increase in job insecurity, stress, family breakdown, drug abuse and crime. In the developing world there is ever increasing not less real poverty, more not fewer environmental and economic refugees and an even greater gap between the rich and the poor.

We haven't come any closer to the promised land of plenty for all. From many, the dream has turned into a nightmare.

The GREEN SOCIETY Government would accept that many of these trends are directly related to two facts common to all "civilised" modern societies, and unchallenged by any major party:

- the governing principle of modern society is economic growth, not the well-being of people, or survival of the eco-system.

- the way in which we keep national accounts measures only material wealth . GDP/GNP as our prime indicator of economic success does not measure the unpaid work done by the community, women, families, time spent in education, and welfare. The economic equation does not show the environmental and social costs.

Thus economies are growing, whilst nature suffers, and society sickens.

The second millenium will demand an increasingly responsible society, one in which we will with compassion and kindness recognise finally our true and humble place on Earth, honour its beauty, encourage its preservation, ensure its enhancement and secure for all of its people, and its fishes of the seas and its birds of the air, - indeed its every living thing - true safety and the chance to live in balance and serenity.

We recognise that our activities are inevitably interconnected to all life on Earth. Within that recognition lies the necessary limit to material growth. We welcome the responsibility which we enjoy towards those of us who might be less fortunate and towards those other living things which are vulnerable to our excesses.

### **New Values**

The GREEN SOCIETY believes that the global and local environmental crisis and social dislocation will not be addressed successfully simply by shifting more funds into conservation or by bolstering poorly funded public agencies.

Real change will only come through a fundamental shift in the values by which we live and manage our human and natural resources. Any development of any kind must be environmentally and socially sustainable. We must ask about the impact of our actions on our communities and our natural environment before we attempt to calculate a profit.

As environmental pressures worsen around the world these questions are being forced upon us. We are losing the ability to react in time and control the rate of change.

The GREEN SOCIETY has a positive alternative. New Zealand is ideally placed to lead the way in the development of alternative, sustainable ways to live in harmony with ourselves and nature. A GREEN SOCIETY Government would raise awareness amongst New Zealanders about the deeper issues facing us and would present a genuine, alternative vision for a future sustainable society.

We set ourselves up as a party because no other political group is addressing the root causes of our environmental and social disintegration. And because we identified a need for a truly independent green party in New Zealand, free of association with left or right wing ideology.

The GREEN SOCIETY Government would lead the way to ensure that the world to be inherited by our children was a world worth living in.

### **Sustainability**

The GREEN SOCIETY is dedicated to the principle of true sustainability of resources both human and of nature. It believes in development in the widest sense - of soul and spirit as much as of material wealth and physical comfort. Whatever role economic theories might play in the lives of people the GREEN SOCIETY believes that those theories should never be to the exclusion of environmental protection and human potential.

As a matter of good economics we would make sustainability, not growth, the first priority of our GREEN SOCIETY Government. We would measure our progress as in nature: not in one-sided economic terms alone but against a balanced score-card that included the health of our people and communities and the condition of our environment. Our decision-makers in Government and business would be made accountable to their local communities, to the environment, and to future generations.

Underlying all human ambitions and actions is the necessity to act sustainably at all times. We are conscious that any discussion of environmental restoration would be worthless without regard to the larger picture of international trade and finance based on the role of the marketplace. We have reached the point where, unchecked, the marketplace's unrestrained developmental exploitation of both human and natural resources could inevitably lead to the destruction of life on Earth.

### **Global Responsibility**

This manifesto argues for radical rethinks of the ways in which New Zealanders meet our challenges in Aotearoa and of our approaches to our international obligations to those billion or more people abroad whose precarious hold on life demands our immediate response.

Given the nature of the global environmental crises which have been recognised for thirty years by Governments and people world-wide we would encourage all New Zealanders to devote our lives, our learnings and our skills to environmental and social restoration in any country where they could be of use. The GREEN SOCIETY Government would give every assistance to such work.

### **The Pursuit of true Progress**

Since 1945 we have allowed the corporate culture to replace the military and the church as our dominant influence. The last 50 years have been the most invasive and destructive of all human history. They have been one of unqualified consumption of products and resources. All other human pursuits like spiritual development, the arts and culture have been second-placed by that devotion to commercial interests.

We need a new idea of "progress": one which would include responses from all participants as to what life means or should mean to them, an assessment driven from within each person rather than by corporate stimulus in advertisements. A Genuine Progress Indicator (GPI) would highlight the range of other social, environmental, health, employment, cultural and public safety and education indicators of our collective well-being.

By such inclusionary politics, the GREEN SOCIETY Government would hope that all citizens would be enthused to be responsible for their lives in all ways, acting together to re-create local communities which would see themselves always as part of the greater, global community.

That restored and sustainable social and natural environment of that greater community would be the responsibility of us all.

## **NEW POLICY DIRECTIONS**

### **I THE ECONOMY**

#### **1. From Growth towards a sustainable balanced Economy**

We are in our economic activities part of nature. We use it's resources and dump our waste into the environment. Earth is limited in space and resources. Nowhere in nature exists a linear development like perpetual growth. Every life is cyclic and to be sustained it has to be in balance with its supporting eco-system.

Therefore we must change direction from growth to a balanced sustainable economy.

The GREEN SOCIETY is committed to New Zealand being the first country to submit National Sustainability Reports in accordance with the demands of the 1992 Rio Earth Summit. Within this structure local sustainability reporting , already influential in parts of the US, will come into its own together with corporate and governmental sustainability reporting. These reports will be vital indicators (the canary in the cage) which will allow civil society to judge if there has been improvement in any real sense.

#### **2. New Economic Instruments**

A GREEN SOCIETY Government would adopt new alternative instruments to measure economic performance.

The present attempts to run the economy with the monetary instrument of controlling inflation and sights fixes on the GDP/GNP figure can only be compared with the attempt to "fly a jumbo jet with just the fuel gauge" ( US Prof. Hazel Henderson).

GDP/GNP is in itself totally inadequate as it measures only the monetary economy and disregards the unpaid work of women, families and communities which amounts to up to 50 % of all "economic" activity.

We have to fill the economic instrument panel with other economic figures (like employment, balance of payment/trade, debt ratios). Environmental (such as air and water quality, erosion of our soils and pollution of the oceans), human (health such as infant mortality and the rate of preventable diseases) and social indicators (education achievements, family breakdown, drug abuse and crime) also have to be included. We have to move beyond the conventional economic models.

The GREEN SOCIETY proposes the establishment of academic chairs and/or institutes for alternative sustainable economics in those of our tertiary institutions which have economic departments. This will not only develop these instruments but create a basis for open minded rational debate and the development of research-based alternatives to conventional economic theory.

#### **3. New Zealand Ownership and the local Economy**

New Zealand economic sovereignty is crucial if we want to be in control of our own destiny.

Our needs can best be served if the economic decisions are made in the community which has to bear the consequences of these decisions. The GREEN SOCIETY would support New Zealand ownership of our assets. We cannot look after our environment and community if decisions are made in New York, London or Tokyo.

We have to support and give assistance to small local businesses, move to more self reliance and set overall guide-lines for foreign ownership of New Zealand assets. One of the results of strengthening community-based small business will be the creation of employment for New Zealanders in New Zealand.

We would encourage small businesses and would expect them to be concerned about protecting both environmental and social values globally by ensuring that their constitutions, product lines and methods were within such criteria. We would encourage partnerships between small businesses here and similar enterprises in developing countries.

#### **4. GATT and World Trade Organisation ( WTO )**

A GREEN SOCIETY Government will review the GATT agreement and the rules of the World Trade Organisation ( WTO ). With no democratic control or accountability to the people of the world these international treaties are designed to favour transnational corporations (TNCs). We would require the UN Code of Conduct for TNCs to be re-instated and the UN Centre for TNCs to be re-established.

Under the present rules we are not even allowed to protect our environment because it can be seen as a trade barrier.

Trade as any other economic activity has to serve the needs of the people and in this case New Zealanders. So far New Zealand has already suffered double the job losses through the removal of trade regulations than the promised gains in employment. The history of the admired economic success stories like the Asian Tiger countries shows that these have build there "successful" economies by protecting their own interests.

The GREEN SOCIETY calls upon all New Zealand politicians to look after our environment and our people and not the interests of transnational corporations.

The alternative to GATT/WTO is not no trade but fair trade. A GREEN SOCIETY Government would ask the UN to report on the impact of the Bretton Woods' agreements and the WTO and their effect on the debt burdens of the South and on the threatened global environment: oceans, fisheries, forests, biodiversity, etc.. The agreements have created a class of economies which has prevented countries in the South from meeting their own economic, social, spiritual and cultural needs

The part played by GATT/WTO in rural economies and in preventing the achievement of environmentally safe agricultural practices is inextricably linked to the corporate manufacture and promotion of pesticides, *and other agricultural chemicals*. The role of public relations firms artificially creating markets and protecting corporate interests would be a matter for examination especially as it affects biodiversity.

#### **5. Strong Market through tough anti-monopoly laws**

The so called "free" market is an economic myth. The reality is the decline of real competition because the present ( lack of ) rules has lead to the formation of the huge transnational conglomerates which monopolize world trade. Seventy % of present international trade is actually conducted within transnational corporations and not between companies or countries.

The GREEN SOCIETY will promote the strengthening of market forces and real competition by strong national and international anti-monopoly laws - especially where market forces are not ensuring that large corporations are respecting environmental imperatives or are not preventing adverse effects being caused.

## **6. True Cost Accounting**

Part of a sustainable economic system is the need to make all environmental and social costs of our economic activities visible.

At present environmental and social costs of business are not built into the cost structure and price of the product or service. Private enterprise makes money by polluting our water, soil and atmosphere. The whole community bears the costs of the clean up, health services, social support and the general infrastructure.

The GREEN SOCIETY will introduce true cost accounting for all economic activities by internalizing social and environmental costs of production and distribution. Only if the price of a product reflects its true cost and is not subsidised by society. For the environment goes even by future generations can the damaging effects of today's methods of production be halted and reversed.

## **7. Taxation**

### **Ecological Tax Reform**

The present tax system sends all the wrong signals to the economy. Desirable activities like work and employment are penalized by taxes. Undesirable activities like burning of fossil fuels and waste of energy and resources are even subsidised.

The GREEN SOCIETY will introduce an Ecological Tax Reform. It will be revenue neutral. It will shift the tax burden from desirable onto undesirable economic activities without raising the overall tax in the economy.

Internationally the need for ecological tax reform has been recognized as being "economically necessary" ( General Director for Economy and Finance in 1994 Annual Economic Report of the EU Commission ).

### **GST Anomalies**

Financial services are at present excluded from GST. This sector of the economy is now almost completely foreign owned. The GREEN SOCIETY will review the GST exemption for financial services.

In New Zealand we see a widening gap between the rich and the poor. The top 15 % of New Zealanders own 75 % of the countries assets. The GST regime also disadvantages the poor. The GREEN SOCIETY would look at rectifying the problem by eliminating or reducing the income tax - PAYE - on lower incomes.

## **8. The Role of the Reserve Bank**

We accept that it is useful to control inflation. However, a single-minded policy to target inflation by keeping interest rates and the exchange rate high effectively squeezes the tradeable goods sector while encouraging us to rely more heavily on imports. The resulting high value of the NZ dollar makes locally produced goods less competitive both domestically and overseas as in both places they must compete with foreign produced items. Overall, we become less competitive and less self-reliant and suffer high unemployment.

This present policy is even more detrimental to our trade balance and balance of payment with a deficit of currently \$ 4 billion a year.

A GREEN SOCIETY Government would review the Reserve Bank Act. Other policy aims like employment, balance of trade must be taken into consideration.

## II Environmental and Conservation Policies

### 1. Climate control issues

It is now well established that Earth's atmosphere is warming. The warming is linked to emissions of CO<sub>2</sub> and other greenhouse gases into the atmosphere. The cost of this warming could be extremely high. As a matter of urgency, we must reduce our emission of those gases. Hence:

- a) Despite New Zealand's commitments under the UN Framework Climate Change Convention 1992 which we would endorse the GREEN SOCIETY would set in place measures that would enable us to reduce CO<sub>2</sub> emissions to 80% of 1990 levels by 2005.
- b) We do not accept the net approach of subtracting absorption by plantation trees from our carbon dioxide emissions. While such trees may temporarily hold carbon but much of the carbon will enter the atmosphere at a later date after these trees have been harvested and the timber used.
- c) The GREEN SOCIETY would institute a carbon tax which would be introduced in such a way that other taxes would be reduced.
- d) This would be complimented by policies that would ensure that fossil fuel energy was not subsidised and that the development of renewable energy sources was encouraged.
- e) It would also be aided by a transport policy that would eliminate subsidies for private motor vehicle transport and encourage the development of improved public transport systems.

### 2. Pollution and environmental degradation

A GREEN SOCIETY Government would introduce into all new and existing legislation covering all potentially harmful substances and would practice the precautionary approach. This means that unknown but possibly adverse effects are avoided even in the absence of scientific certainty of any likely damage to the environment. The burden of proof has to be on the user that a substance or practice is not harmful to the environment.

Pollution must be reduced to levels that the environment as well as human health can deal with and absorb with zero net damage. Those who pollute or degrade the environment would be charged for the cost of the damage.

A GREEN SOCIETY Government would urgently restore contaminated sites and recover the costs from the polluter. It would also gradually introduce and police car exhaust emission standards to high international levels.

### 3. Habitat, biodiversity and wilderness protection

In New Zealand the smallest number of people, in the shortest period of time, have done the greatest damage to the natural environment in the history of mankind.

The GREEN SOCIETY would protect, restore and enhance natural habitats. We would increase flora and fauna habitat reserves and wilderness area reserves. We would actively consider the role of zoning in the achievement of sustainability in mixed use areas, safe public open spaces, protection, restoration and enhancement of the natural environment, sublimation of human settlements to the local biodiversity including recognition of and provision for ecological corridors.

DOC funding would be increased in light of a nation wide environmental audit to identify areas in critical state of deterioration. Resources will then be targeted to reverse the current trend and to begin restoring and re-establishing areas of ecological importance.

#### **4. National Parks free for all to enjoy**

The very principle of user pays for the enjoyment of natural beauty is abhorrent. We have a birth right to go to the beach and climb the mountains free of charge.

To charge for access to our areas of natural beauty would restrict them to those who could afford to see them is to undervalue what this beauty means to New Zealanders. We must not see our natural wilderness areas just for making money. It is dangerously naive to fool ourselves that their preservation will be ensured by tourists and in the end ourselves going through toll gates.

By turning our areas of outstanding beauty into expensive Disneyland type fenced off theme parks, we are embarking on the road to privatisation of our natural heritage.

#### **6. Active Support of Non Government Organisations (NGOs)**

Our NGOs do so much of the work to highlight what is needed to protect our environment and an harmonious social fabric. Yet they are grossly underfunded. Many lead the world with their work in environmental protection. We would actively support their involvement in international bodies such as the UN Commission on Sustainable Development.

### **III Built (Urban) Environment Policies**

#### **1. Healthy and safe Cities**

The GREEN SOCIETY would seek to ensure the safety and health of our urban environment. The healthy city must be safe of pollution, chemical spillage and of environmental disasters. As well, all of us must be free of fear of violence and crime. We do not want ghettos of the rich guarded by private security, burglar alarms and surveillance cameras. A strong and serene community helps its weakest members.

#### **2. Environmentally conscious design of cities and buildings**

The building code would be revised to avoid sick building syndrome caused by factors such as materials, lighting and air conditioning.

During their construction and use buildings are estimated to consume more energy and resources than any other human activity. Better building practices can lead to immense savings to the benefit of the environment.

The GREEN SOCIETY would ensure that the best environmentally friendly technology was incorporated into future building practices.

The use of traditional and alternative natural materials, techniques and knowledge would be encouraged.

Buildings as well as cities must be built primarily for people not profit.

#### **IV Energy Policy**

##### **1. Parliamentary Commissioner and national strategy for Energy**

A GREEN SOCIETY Government would create the office a Parliamentary Commissioner for Energy who would be appointed by and answerable to Parliament.

The Commissioner would be responsible for the development of a national energy strategy and for advising a GREEN SOCIETY Government on projected future energy requirements and strategic options for meeting them, the security of supply issues, our local research and development needs, technological developments and their possible application to New Zealand.

The efficient operation of all energy generators, network operators and energy suppliers and the various energy markets would also be the responsibility of the Commissioner.

##### **2. Non-renewable resources**

The national strategy would initiate a move from fossil fuels to other alternatives through proper pricing and other strategies.

It would examine full cost accounting to ensure that resource users paid all the cost involved and were not being subsidised by others. Subsidies lead to the over-use of resources and to waste. Hence:

- a) All subsidies would be removed from the exploration and recovery of non-renewable resources.
- b) Companies which were exploiting non-renewables would be required to pay all necessary infrastructure costs, including the costs of relocation of populations at the end of the project and all costs of complete site restoration.
- c) Where appropriate, a levy would be charged on the extraction of non-renewable resources to fund research into alternatives for the future.

##### **3. Energy efficiency standards and labelling**

Energy efficiency standards would be set for common appliances and industrial equipment. Such equipment would be required to be sold with labelling which would show its energy use in standard, easily understood terms.

##### **4. Energy efficiency standards for buildings**

Energy efficiency standards would be set for all new buildings including insulation, lighting and built-in heating, ventilation and air conditioning systems, all at the highest level which would be cost-effective.

Energy consumption ratings would be given for buildings at the time of construction and at the time of sale.

The Property Law Act 1952's provisions as to tenancies would be amended to require all existing buildings which are rented or leased within three years to meet the highest level of energy efficiency that is cost-effective for retro-fitting. Projected energy costs would be required to be set out separately in lease contracts.

## **5. Efficient energy use by government and local bodies**

Government and local bodies would be required to purchase new equipment and upgrade existing equipment to provide the highest level of energy efficiency which was cost effective. They would have to use renewable energy resources to the highest extent that can be economically justified. That would provide a public awareness of what was possible and encourage a market for the associated goods and services.

## **6. Creation of a market for natural gas**

At present, much of our natural gas is contracted to a small number of purchasers. Because there is no properly developed market for it there is no way to establish whether it is being used efficiently.

To ensure the efficient and contestable use of the remaining Maui gas contracts, both State-owned electricity generators would be obliged to put their gas supply up for tender in an open tender process. They would be allowed to participate in the bidding as far as they could use the gas without having to subsidise their gas fired stations from low-cost hydro.

## **7. Electricity generation to be retained in public Ownership**

ECNZ, Contact and Transpower would be retained in public ownership. The generation companies would be required to participate in the wholesale electricity market without exercising undue monopoly or duopoly power. Because the recent split of ECNZ and Contact does not appear likely to serve any useful purpose we would review the situation to determine whether the public interest would be better served by re-uniting those two entities.

## **8. Efficient operation of state-owned generators**

In order to minimise inefficiencies resulting from under-pricing and from cross-subsidisation of power stations within each State-owned enterprise those organisations would be required to sell power at no less than the cost of production to the station which had produced it, or at the marginal cost for the whole power system, whichever is the greater.

## **9. Market to allow sale and purchase of clean energy**

In addition to electricity generated from major hydro stations and fossil fuels, the Green Government would require a separate price to be set for power from renewable sources such as solar, wind, wave and micro-hydro. That would ensure that consumers who wished to buy such power could do so *via* the energy companies which had supplied them.

## **10. The retail electricity market**

The Green Government would split energy companies into energy supply and energy network operations. At present, the newly formed retail energy companies can cross-subsidise both the risk and the cost of entering into power-purchasing contracts or the cost of building power stations (which are energy sales activities) against the network operations. This is undesirable because it reduces efficiency.

Power companies would be required to split their shares into energy shares and network shares which would reflect the two separate business activities. The market would immediately value the risks and profit potential of each operation. That would reduce costs by removing the inefficiencies implicit in the current arrangement and introduce a contestable market for all consumers.

For simplicity, consumers would continue to receive only one bill which would be issued by their network supplier and be itemised as to network charges and energy charges. The network supplier would never own the electricity but would simply provide a revenue collection service between the customer and the energy supplier.

#### **11. Regulation of network operators**

The network operation businesses are natural monopolies because in most instances it would not be justifiable for two network operators to provide power lines in the same area. Because of that, those businesses would have been better left in public, local body or community ownership. However, given that they have now been privatised, our policy would be to regulate them so as to preclude their making monopoly profits.

#### **12. Fixed charges to be eliminated**

Fixed charges reduce the incentive to use energy sensibly. Except in cases relating to large customers for whom special lines need to be provided, we would therefore require that all fixed charges, other than reasonable initial connection charges, be removed, and that all charges be on a per unit of electricity basis.

#### **13. Requirement to buy power from customers**

Power supply companies would be required to buy back power from their customers and from small local generators at its avoidance cost - that is, at the cost they are able to save by not purchasing that power from the wholesale market.

#### **14. Requirement to provide on-going supply**

At present, there is no clear responsibility to provide continuity of supply to customers. This could result in incorrect power pricing in the short term and in serious problems resulting from insufficient generating capacity or lack of energy efficiency measures in the longer term.

Because power supply companies require few assets in order to back up their responsibility to provide continuity of supply to their customers they would be required to provide insurance cover against default with all their contracts or alternatively to deposit an interest-bearing bond with the Government which would allow the same purpose to be achieved.

Every power supply company would be required to offer to its customers a variety of different tariffs relating to standardised levels of security of supply. Details of what the standard security levels would be and of how to incorporate the security of the network into these rates would be determined in consultation with power and network companies.

### **V Transport policy**

New Zealand has spread cities which are designed more for the benefit of the private motor vehicles than people. The GREEN SOCIETY would make ecologically sustainable and efficient public transport systems a priority of all future town planning.

The GREEN SOCIETY believes that our transport system should meet people's needs as inexpensively as possible, while at the same time being safe, energy efficient and imposing minimum adverse affects on society. We also believe that our towns and cities should be planned so that we could, if we wished, minimise the time and cost of travel by working and relaxing close to where we live. Transport facilities should be flexible so as not to set in place forms and structures of cities and towns which might thereby be unsustainable.

These ideals are far from being achieved at present. In particular, many years of subsidies for road transport have left us over-dependant on the private car (with its attendant safety and planning effects) and have also led to development of cities which are expensive to service, and are in many ways not people-friendly. At the same time, the development of accessible and relevant public transport systems has been held back through lack of political support.

In order to improve this situation a GREEN SOCIETY Government would require the transport sector, and in particular the road transport system, bear its full costs. At the same time, we would divert a far greater share of the revenue from transport taxes and charges into the development of public transport than at present, and place much greater emphasis on transport safety. We would also remove local body regulations which unjustifiably favoured the private car as a transport mode and review the methods we currently use to plan our living areas. We would expect these policies to result in a significant reduction in the overall costs of our transport sector. In particular, through making public transport a more viable option for many commuters and through other policy provisions we expect over a five year period to:

1. Reduce the use of fossil fuels in the transport sector on a per capita basis by 15% as part of our international treaty commitment to reduced carbon emissions.
2. Reduce the number of deaths each year in the transport sector on a *per capita* basis by a minimum of 40%.
3. Significantly reduce traffic densities in urban areas.
4. Significantly reduce the average time people spend commuting to and from work.
5. Design communities which would agree to live without car ownership but which would be supported by private enterprise taxi and low-cost car rentals for out of town use.

These changes would do more than just increase our sense of community, reduce our costs of living and increase our quality of life. They would also start to reduce our reliance on non-renewable hydrocarbon fuels, reduce our need for transport-related imports, and make a significant contribution to reducing our contribution to global warming through carbon dioxide emissions. We would also promote the use of alternative, synthetic oils and accessories to reduce dependence on fossil fuels.

### **1. Road transport**

The GREEN SOCIETY would remove all subsidies of road transport. We believe all costs (including environmental, health and social costs) should be reflected in the road taxes and charges paid by users.

We would collect them through fuel taxes and road user charges.

Car usage is currently promoted by local body requirements on developers to provide parking spaces. We would review these requirements with the objective of leaving such decisions to developers wherever possible but with the underlying injunction to favour public over private transport, pedestrian over vehicular.

The provision of company vehicles and free parking spaces by businesses to their employees produces a strong distortion in favour of those employees driving to work. We would make the value of cars and parking places provided by businesses a part of the employee's taxable income. This would require employees to determine whether or not to use a car as their means to get to work.

## **2. Rural roading**

As with other roads we intend to remove the cost of maintaining roading from rates by funding it from general user charges paid nationally by road users and from specific user charges paid by major users in the area, e.g. logging operators.

## **3. Vehicle emissions**

There are currently no effective controls on vehicle emissions which are damaging air quality and adversely affecting health (particularly in some city areas) as well as wasting fuel.

We would introduce standards similar to those used in the most stringent overseas jurisdictions and to make meeting these standards a necessary part of the normal warrant of fitness test. We would also increase policing in order to ensure Court prosecutions of owners whose vehicles have emitted visible smoke.

## **4. Public transport**

The GREEN SOCIETY believes that transport users should pay all their own costs. However, the transport system is currently skewed strongly in favour of the private car and this trend cannot be left to the market to correct. Of the approximately \$750 million a year which flow into the land transport fund, only around \$50 million are used to support public transport.

We would make a major increase in this amount. Auckland, in particular, needs to develop a fast, regular, flexible and reliable public transport system which would offer a real alternative to the private car. Other towns and cities also need better transport systems. The benefits from this are potentially enormous in terms of reduced commuting time, fuel usage, accidents, noise and vehicle emissions, and road congestion.

**For urban transport we would favour varied sized bus fleets over any fixed rail or other inflexible installations.**

## **5. Rail**

Although New Zealand's rail system is currently in the hands of a monopoly foreign owner we still believe that rail transport offers advantages in terms of safety and fuel efficiency compared to road transport. We would explore ways to gain the maximum possible benefit from our rail system.

In particular, we would work with the rail operators to investigate how more of our road freight vehicles and trailers could be carried on rail so as to reduce fuel costs, road wear and congestion, accidents, and employment needs.

## **VI RESOURCE USE**

### **1. Sustainable Management**

We believe that Earth's resources should be used in an environmentally and socially sustainable manner, that the users of resources should pay the full costs, and that the benefits of those resources should be equitably shared. We are concerned that in many countries demands for economic growth are being accompanied by increasing poverty. We have therefore adopted the following objectives:

- a) the environmentally and socially sustainable use of all renewable resources, including air, land and water.
- b) the minimisation of the use of non-renewable resources through proper management, efficient use and re-use, repair and replacement by renewable alternatives where economically feasible.
- c) retention of natural resources in public ownership, including areas of land such as national parks and protected habitats, with the public receiving a direct return in return when these resources are exploited.

### **2. The Resource Management Act 1991**

This Act provides a framework to achieve sustainable resource use. At present it is not functioning adequately because its notification provisions. Neighbours are unaware of plans to build or to subdivide despite the likelihood of adverse effects being caused to them. A GREEN SOCIETY Government would broaden such provisions to ensure greater consultation with those likely to be affected.

The role of the Department of Conservation as a public advocate under the Conservation Act 1987 and the Resource Management Act 1991 would be substantially strengthened.

When a resource consent is being considered, the costs and difficulties involved often preclude parties opposing it from doing so effectively. Where there is a public interest element we believe this is unsatisfactory and where appropriate we would fund submissions before consent authorities or the Planning Tribunal or High Court.

Where the Department does not wish to take up an issue of public interest, or it believes another group would be better placed to do so, it would have the power to fund such a group under a GREEN SOCIETY Government.

### **3. Reduction of consumer and trade waste**

There is no such thing as "waste". Everything is a resource. Everything which is not recovered represents lost resources for which we appear to have no immediate use. Non-recovery results in on-going environmental costs. We therefore intend to introduce policies that would drastically recover resources and encourage a far higher level of re-use, repair, restoration and recycling than we currently achieve.

### **4. Consumer packaging**

A GREEN SOCIETY Government would encourage the simplified packaging of consumer goods and the use of packaging materials that are either recyclable or produced in an environmentally and socially sustainable manner.

We would promote the use of returnable containers for beer, wine, soft drinks milk, and similar items. Businesses with significant market share would be required to offer returnable containers. Businesses which sold such products would be required to accept returned containers for re-filling.

At present the recycling of plastics is difficult because of the large number of plastics in use and because some of those are labelled as being recyclable when in fact locally recycling does not occur. We would remove recycling signs from locally produced products which are not in fact recyclable. We would encourage the use of alternatives where ever economically possible.

The GREEN SOCIETY would follow overseas legislation relating to packaging requirements we would make producers of consumer goods responsible for disposing of materials used in packaging their products.

## **5. Charges for resource recovery**

The amount of waste produced by households can be strongly influenced by local body policies.

We intend to investigate the possibility of requiring local bodies to charge for removal of garbage on a weight basis, including all haulage, disposal and environmental costs.

## **6. Recycling of waste**

Because much of what is disposed of as rubbish is potentially valuable and should be recovered and re-cycled we would seek to recover all metals, glass, plastics and clean paper. In addition, because we do not believe it is appropriate for clean organic material such as food and garden scraps to be sent to land fills we would promote composting.

We intend to undertake a major review of the way that resources are currently dealt with, with a view to achieving the above goals.

# **VII Social Issues**

## **1. Health**

The GREEN SOCIETY believes that all persons should have access to good basic medical care, and that the State has an obligation to ensure that treatment be available and be satisfactory. In particular, waiting lists should not be used as a method to control medical spending. Treatment should be available within a reasonable time, and certainly before the condition of the patient can significantly deteriorate.

We also believe that we are each responsible for our own health. We consider that the true costs of health-threatening practices such as smoking, alcohol and other drug abuse should be met primarily by those who indulge in them. We all have the responsibility to engage in preventive medicine and positively ensure that we use our best endeavours to remain free of dependence on others for our good health. We would concentrate on ensuring nutritional education.

To help ensure better performance in the provision of medical care we will investigate the introduction of non-performance penalties. We would consider making the health service responsible for the payment of sickness benefits and require it to support accident victims if treatment is unable to be given within a reasonable time.

We will continue to devolve responsibility for medical care to allow greater input from others besides medical doctors, whose services may be more appropriate and/or more cost effective in certain circumstances.

A GREEN SOCIETY government will ensure that alternative treatments and traditional medicines whose efficacy is established are treated equally with other medical options. A GREEN SOCIETY Government would fund appropriate research into their effectiveness.

Advertising of harmful substances like tobacco and alcohol would be prohibited under a GREEN SOCIETY Government. Manufacturers of these substances would have to contribute to the health costs of their products.

## **2. Unsustainable agriculture**

Because of the unacceptable nature of intensive agriculture and the attendant use of pesticides and practices which have led to erosion and soil pollution we would fund an investigation into such practices and into their consequences such as the live sheep trade, genetic engineering, fluoridation and other quick-fixes which have accompanied the break-down of agriculture and the fishing industry. To prevent chemical spray drift we would support the Agricultural Chemicals Trespass Bill which presently awaits introduction into the House of Representatives.

## **3. Education**

The GREEN SOCIETY believes that learning and gaining an understanding of our surroundings is an investment of fundamental importance for people to develop their souls, their skills and their respect for others. Education is essential to enable us to lead useful and fulfilling lives, to serve others and to allow our society to be able to evolve in a happy and constructive manner.

We therefore intend to foster an education system that would provide appropriate opportunities for learning to people of all ages and all backgrounds, regardless of their ability to pay. Where necessary, we would give adequate scholarship, or other support to students at universities and polytechnics.

We believe that everyone should have an understanding of social and environmental issues as well as reading, writing, mathematics and history. Environmental education and ecological studies would be made compulsory subjects from kindergarten through to tertiary level.

## **4. Employment**

A generation ago, New Zealand used to have almost negligible unemployment. Recent economic policies have reduced local employment opportunities and made us more reliant on cheaper imports. We intend to reverse this situation by increasing our self-reliance and employment levels to enable those who are currently unemployed to find worthwhile and meaningful work.

While the economy was adjusting itself to that change we would identify useful community needed tasks which could be done by those without work and relieve those without occupation of the burden of being paid an unemployment benefit to do nothing.

## **5. Retirement savings:**

New Zealand is almost alone among the OECD countries in not allowing income tax deferral up to a certain limit. The Green Government would encourage us to save for our retirement with tax concessions and also encourage the funds raised to be invested in ethical investments of benefit to the environment.

We would not take savings from retired persons for hospital or short-term rest home care.

## **6. Social Welfare**

We intend to create a society in which the needs of people can be met by themselves or in their own family or local community to the greatest extent possible, without intervention by the State and without the need for private charity.

We would give everyone of working age the opportunity to contribute to society and ensure that they were compensated at a level which would allow self-reliance and encourage self-esteem.

For those who are unable to provide for themselves, we would also ensure that the wider community made adequate resources available to allow an acceptable and dignified living standard. We would seek to create a society where personal dignity and fulfilment were the birthright of all citizens regardless of wealth.

## **7. Justice**

Under our current system, the rights of people who have committed crimes are well established. The same is not true of the victims of crime. The GREEN SOCIETY believes that attending to the needs of victims must be given much greater priority and that determining restitution or other appropriate responses by those convicted should become an integral part of all court cases.

Keeping people in prisons is expensive, and probably in large counter-productive. While some people have to be kept out of society for safety reasons, we believe that in general prison sentences should be avoided where possible in favour of options that allow rehabilitation of the offender, and restitution to the victim or to society.

A GREEN SOCIETY Government will start work on a written constitution which not only would deal with the mechanics of Government, the Legislature and the Judiciary under the new MMP system but which against the requirements of the Treaty of Waitangi would also enshrine basic human rights as well as the rights of nature and eco-systems.

## **8. Foreign Policy and Responsibilities**

New Zealand's recent level of foreign aid contributions of 0.2% of GNP has been unacceptably inadequate when measured against the target set by the United Nations of 0.7% of GNP. Despite a renewed commitment at the 1992 Rio Earth Summit to achieve the 0.7% target, we continue to have one of the poorest records among developed countries, and the current Government has not budgeted to improve the situation.

By world standards we are a well-developed, comparatively wealthy country whose activities are having an impact on the global environment. As a people we are concerned with humanitarian issues and giving help when needed.

The GREEN SOCIETY Government therefore intends to make increases in the amount of foreign aid which we offer so that aid would reach the current United Nations guide-line of 0.7 % within a two year period.

It is our belief that we should primarily concentrate our aid on our immediate surrounding area where it can have a significant and useful effect and where New Zealanders can, when appropriate, be directly involved in its application.

In particular, where necessary, we intend to direct our foreign aid to securing the long term future for our Pacific Island neighbours. For that purpose, we would assist each of them to reach a environmentally and socially sustainable living pattern in which their population would be stable and they would have sufficient resources to support it.

The GREEN SOCIETY supports the de-colonisation of the South Pacific with special emphasis on East Timor and French Polynesia.

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